

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF
POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART

Fifth Series

ESTABLISHED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS, 1832

CONDUCTED BY R. CHAMBERS (SECUNDUS)

No. 103.—VOL. II.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 19, 1885.

PRICE 1½d.

CHRISTMAS IN OTHER COUNTRIES.

THE old salute of 'A merry Christmas and a happy New Year' again resounds on every side. Christmas—the season for balls and parties, for an endless routine of gaieties, for the reunion of long-parted friends, for the giving of presents and the interchange of compliments—has again arrived. Let us now see how this ancient festival is held in other countries.

Christmas day in *Norway*! To many this will only convey ideas of a bleak wintry region. But do not shudder, my fair reader, at the idea of a Christmas in such a latitude. You need not, I assure you; for if the lakes are frozen and the rivers ice-locked, the air is clear and exhilarating, and the sun shines brightly o'er a cloudless heaven, as it lightens up the wide expanse of snow into a brilliant sparkle. Then the people themselves are a hardy, kindly, hospitable race, and welcome the stranger with open hands and a warmth that quite makes up for any cold without. Indeed, the Norwegians possess in a high degree this primitive virtue of hospitality; it is looked upon as a national duty; and he who should omit to practise it would be regarded as a grave offender against the proprieties of life.

On the morning of the festal day the roads are thronged with sledges conveying visitors to their destinations; the brass bells which decorate the hardy little Norwegian horses making a merry tinkling in the frosty air. The very air itself seems to palpitate with the sweet chimes of the bell-melodies; and is not a sleigh-ride one of those delights that defy rivalry?

The day always begins with divine service. The churches are very plain, and the worship simple; and whenever the service is over, relations and friends assemble at different houses according to invitation, where a 'preliminary repast, consisting of a variety of viands, liqueurs, and sweets, is partaken of before dinner, which (woe to the dyspeptic!) follows immediately after.

The first courtesy, however, shown to a male

guest on entering a Norwegian house, no matter at what hour of the day, is a pipe of tobacco. The dinner is a lengthy affair; fish, poultry, meat, entrées, cakes, and preserves go round and round again and again. Between the courses, intervals are allowed for the singing of national songs, the giving of standard toasts, and the drinking of healths. To the Norwegian, the words *Gamlé Norgé* ('Old Norway') have a powerful spell in them, and on festive occasions like the present they cannot be resisted. In an instant *Gamlé Norgé* is repeated by every voice; the glasses are filled and drained; and then bursts forth in a simultaneous chorus the national song of Norway, *For Norgé*. There is no nation in the world that can surpass Norway in this enthusiastic love of country.

When the dinner is over, the chief guest rises, saying, *Tak for marden* (Thanks for the meal, or entertainment), which is responded to by all present, who bow to the host and hostess at each end of the table. At seven o'clock, tea is handed round; then a little later in the evening, comes a knock at the door, and some four or five boys enter dressed in white mantles; the tallest of these holds a large coloured lantern shaped like a star; while another bears a small illuminated glass box containing two little wax Dutch dolls, one of which represents the Virgin Mary sitting in a chair, and the other the infant Jesus lying in a cradle. A bit of candle is moved by a wire from side to side of the lantern, making it appear as if the doll-mother was rocking the cradle at her feet; and the lantern is meant to represent the star in the East which guided the Magi to the lowly manger. These mysteries are all explained during the exhibition in the words of a carol, chanted by the boys.

After these lads are dismissed with some slight refreshment or bonbons and a little money, another band of masked performers, rather older than the last, make their appearance. They are dressed in military fashion, with cocked-hats on the head, tattered-looking uniforms, purposely decked with tinsel, and wooden swords suspended

at their sides. (They are very like our own November Guys, only much more interesting.) These maskers perform all kinds of fantastic tricks for the amusement of the spectators, conspicuous among them being a pantomimic military review. No one in Norway ever refuses to admit these performers of their annual mummeries, or sends them away empty-handed.

Numerous diversions and games now follow among the household; supper is announced and partaken of; the gentlemen settle down for a general smoking; and the ladies disappear upstairs, where an eager talking and clatter of tongues goes on as they put on their wraps. Then come the sledges to the door; hearty shakings of the hand, with loudly expressed good wishes, are exchanged all round; and the happy guests are borne swiftly over the snow, glittering in the moonlight, to their respective homes.

In Sweden, the old saying that 'cleanliness is next to godliness' is exemplified then, and evidently appreciated; for the dwellings of all classes are thoroughly renovated for the occasion. An almost universal custom exists there of tying a sheaf of corn to a pole, which is placed in the garden or near the house, for the benefit of the birds, which suffer severely at this season from the inclemency of the weather. Thus they do not forget, when all the land is rejoicing in a general feast, to show kindness to the inferior animals. After supper, masked figures come in bearing a bell and a basket of presents for the household and friends; and every house is illuminated, and the members of each made happy in the witnessing and partaking of the many pleasures of the season.

Christmas in Italy, as elsewhere, brings round a yearly sanctification of home, and is a festival which blends devotion with the kindest and tenderest feelings. The greatest events of the year are the sumptuous banquets which are given on Christmas eve; and as it is mostly fish, done up in wonderful and diverse ways, that is then consumed during the whole week before the great feast night, little business is transacted save at the fish-market. The churches are largely attended at this season; although the scene at midnight mass is avoided by the more respectable members of the community, comprising, as it does, more than one-half of drunken revellers, and showing a strange lack of either reverence or decorum from the priests or congregation.

The Log—a real Christmas log—is in full blaze in the kitchen; the great dining-hall is also crackling with its roaring fire; and the whole house has received as thorough a warming as if the feast were to last throughout the year. Boys and girls now vie with each other in reciting and showing off their accomplishments, which have been learned expressly for the day, to please and surprise their parents by their progress in the past months; and their presents of work, learning, or ingenuity are duly admired. Then comes a handsome supper, making the children's eyes glisten as they feast on the delicacies and delights before them. After the repast is over, the parents, with some of the elders, retire behind a large curtain erected in the hall, which, when withdrawn, reveals a table loaded with carefully wrapped-up parcels; conspicuous among

which is an urn—the urn of fate. The elders range themselves behind the table in demure silence, as, at a given sign, the sons and daughters, relatives and friends, in order of their age, are summoned to approach and bidden to thrust their hand into the urn and draw their lot. This urn is to the Italian children what the Christmas-tree is to the Germans. Many a blank is drawn amid merry laughter; but in the end each has a present; and before the guests depart, exchanges are made among the little ones, till every one is satisfied and has secured what best suits his or her wants.

No one is allowed to be unhappy at that time of the year, at least none whom a small money donation or a piece of firewood can relieve from immediate want; while from the highest to the lowest, each has a Christmas-box.

Nowhere is the abuse of 'boxes' more so than in France, where of late years the custom has been growing to an almost ruinous excess. There, amid all the fêtes and gaiety, when the whole population is bent upon amusement, it is not so much the loving gift that pleases, as it is the cost of that gift that counts. And what with extravagant toys and presents to the family and servants, friends and guests, postmen and shop-messengers, it is no wonder that the poor Paterfamilias groans at the thought of the new year.

New-year's eve is also an important evening with the Germans. In almost every house are parties met to celebrate the old year out with dance and sport; and the instant the city-bell is heard to toll, '*Prosit neu Jahr*' (Happy new year) starts at once from every lip, while a general touching of glasses and drinking of healths and happiness for the coming year ensues. Then the young people present each other, their parents and friends, with verses composed in honour of the occasion, which, being read aloud, are often the cause of banter and renewed merriment. The tables are crowded with dainties, chief among them being large ornamented cakes, and gingerbread in the shape of little hearts, these being thought indispensable to the entertainment. The next morning, every one that meets you salutes you with the same exclamation of '*Prosit neu Jahr*.' It is from Germany that we have taken our Christmas-tree; from the Germans that we have learned to make our social Christmas more a gala day for the children, than, as formerly, one of feasting and riot for ourselves.

The German housewife and mother thinks nothing a trouble which can add to the pleasure of the home-circle; her services, which are many and various, are never begrudged, but are heartily given in the service of love. If she spares no pains on ordinary days for her family's benefit, how much more then does she try to exert herself in the cause of Christmas joys. Her Christmas-tree is of entire home-growth; and in the presents that are made, the toys that are bought or invented to hang upon its branches, as it displays its annual glories and diffuses radiance from its hundred lights on the happy faces about it, not one member of her household but is remembered and represented on that tree of love. Their Christmas is, in truth, a beautiful sight. It is the feast of the Child, and therefore, for His sake, of all children; and the parents derive their true

enjoyment and delight in giving happiness to their little ones. A blessing, many blessings, on the innocent, hearty merriment of such Christmas days! Our homely German cousins have caught the true meaning of the festival.

In America, as in Norway, sleigh-riding is a great feature of this season; and there are few who, on Christmas eve, can withstand the merry chime of the bells, or the fleet riding over the snow-flaked avenues. There is sure to be snow then; and that purest of white mantles spreads on all sides, over everything, as the stars, twinkling in an unclouded sky, shed a subdued light on a scene that rivals description. There, too, Santa Klaus (or St Nicholas) makes his annual appearance, and drops his many gifts into the stockings which the children have hung up before going to bed.

A curious feature of an American Christmas is the egg-nogg and free lunch, distributed at all of the cafés and hotels on Christmas day; and it is needless to say that many, especially the epicures of the town, flock to the festive boards, where large tables are spread out with a luxury and delicacy peculiar to the Christmas *cuisine*. It seems also to be a popular time for marriages; and the Christmas week is a merry one for the honeymoon, as little is thought of but gaiety until the new year has begun. The presentation of 'boxes' is also much in vogue, and all classes have their modes of enjoyment in festal succession.

In Australia, New Zealand, and Africa, the joyous week which ushers the old year out and the new year in falls at a time when the season is at its busiest, and not, as in England, when labour of all kinds is little required, owing to the inclemency of the weather. Christmas is held, of course; but the working members of society have no leisure then for its enjoyment; and indeed, if pressed with orders, have often to spend the day itself in hard work. It cannot then be celebrated, except by a special few, with the hearty pleasure and care-forgetting zest with which it is welcomed in England, Holland, Germany, or indeed the whole of Christian Europe.

In Alexandria, flags hang from the roofs of the consulates, English, American, French, Portuguese, and others; and the guns fire salutes from the Christian vessels in the harbour.

From time immemorial, Christmas has been the most prominent festival in the calendar, and in almost all countries, this social gathering round the household altar, which creates and keeps alive the brightest sympathies of the heart, has been hailed with joy and gladness; and amid the depressed trade and disturbances of the present times, which have more or less affected every link in the chain of society, Christmas nevertheless brings with it a certain charm. Everywhere men give a joyful parting salutation to the old year, and greet with acclamations the advent of the new.

Christmas day in England is very much like a Sunday, the streets being thronged by the same band of steady church-goers, answering to the call of the parish bells. Full services take place in all the churches, which are profusely decked with holly and evergreens. Worship over, the spirit of merriment breaks forth, the festivities of Christmas eve, however, being nearly as lively as those of Christmas itself. Towards evening, the

church-bells peal merrily; blithesome parties gather round the fire; sports and games commence; and the preparations for the morrow go on apace.

In Scotland, although Christmas is yearly becoming of more importance, the pre-eminence is decidedly given to New-year's day and eve. In the days of our forefathers, not only relations assembled in the house, but all the retainers, youth and age, rich and poor, alike participated in the mirth attendant upon the season. But in England, many ancient customs are falling into disuse; indeed, scarcely more than a shadow now remains; for if Christmas is still a religious festival and a family gathering, it has lost the distinction of a feast that bound all ranks together, and that led to a community of feeling between high and low. It was something to speak of long ago. The huge Yule log was drawn by the servants into the great hall, where each member, sitting down in turn on the log, sang a Yule song, and drank a cup of spiced ale to a merry Christmas and a happy new year. The log was then cast on the blazing fire, with prayers for the safety of the house and the happiness of its inmates until the next Christmas-tide should come round again. Then was the riotous time of the reign of the Lord of Misrule; then were the delicious Yule cakes; then were pleasures provided for all; and then, when the huge candles were lighted, and the exertions in dancing, flirting, romping, laughing, kissing under the mistletoe, singing, talking, and last, though by no means least, eating and drinking, had pretty well exhausted the company, did the revellers gather round the crackling log in the capacious chimney, singing songs or telling legendary tales, until the midnight chimes dispersed the happy group.

A superstition, common among the ignorant peasantry, existed till quite lately. This was, that if you stole quietly into the cowhouse at midnight on Christmas eve, you would find the cattle kneeling down immediately after twelve o'clock, as commemorating the supposed similar case of the oxen in whose resting-place Jesus of Nazareth was born; also that bees might be heard to sing in their hives at the same hour. This belief has taken long to be uprooted.

In the old halls and at College tables, the chief dish of the feast was the boar's head—not the goose and turkey of nowadays—which was perfumed with rare spices, and decked out with garlands of holly and rosemary. It was brought in with pompous state by the head-cook, a song being chanted in its honour, either during or after the repast; which song is still sung at the bringing in of the boars' head at Queen's College, Oxford:

The boar's head in hand bear I,
Bedecked with bays and rosemary;
And I pray you, my masters, be merry.
Quot ectis in convivio,
Caput apri defero,
Reddens laudes Domino.

The boar's head, as I understand,
Is the rarest dish in all this land,
Which, thus bedecked with a gay garland,
Let us servare cantico,
Caput apri defero,
Reddens laudes Domino.

Our steward hath promised this
In honour of the King of Bliss,
Which to this day to be served is
In Reginensi Atrio,
Caput apri defero,
Reddens laudes Domino.

Then, too, through the clear crisp air of winter was heard the voice of the wandering singers, last remnant of English minstrelsy, appealing to the charity which at that season rarely failed them, and reminding their hearers in the simple carol strains of the sacred reason for their happiness. This singing of carols dates from the very earliest period of Christmas celebration, when songs of gladness were considered as appropriate to the occasion. Jeremy Taylor says that the first Christmas carol was the *Gloria in Excelsis* of the Bethlehem shepherds. Carol-singing, however, has lost much of its original character. It is the custom now for the common people in England to go about in bands in the early morning, serenading the neighbours with songs relating to Christ's birth; and besides these, we have, both in England and Scotland, the modern 'waits.' The 'waits,' who are but indifferent substitutes for the sweet carols of early times, appear on the scene, with their not always most musical instruments, in the three weeks preceding Christmas; yet there is something solemn in listening to the music that arises in the silence of the night; and something touching, too, as we lie in our warm beds, to think of these poor men playing away in the pinching cold with their numbed fingers.

If the spirit of charity does not now manifest itself in riotous feasts and revelling on festivals, let it still dwell among us in benevolent deeds. Saddened spirits there must be as each Christmas day bears witness to the loss of some dearly loved one; but even for those whose hearts have been scarred and wounded, there is still one thing left that makes the Christmas festival endurable, that is—the children. And so long as there are shivering outcasts who stand in need of some helping hand; of hungry mouths to fill; of bruised spirits to bind up, and broken hearts to heal; so long will there be an opportunity for us to consecrate our Christmas season in the spirit of Him whose name we thus commemorate.

AT TREVENNA COTTAGE.

A STORY IN EIGHT CHAPTERS.—CHAP. VII.

WHEN Captain Avory set out from Hoogies on his way back to Trevenna Cottage, Bosy Groote led his horse by the head as far as the high-road, then, after a few last words, the two men bade each other good-night; and while the captain drove on his way, Bosy sauntered back to the house. There was a heap of wood in one corner of the kitchen; taking an armful of it, Bosy proceeded to light a fire, which, if it did not throw out much heat, served by its blaze to make the place seem a shade less cheerless. The two candles in their empty bottles were still alight on the mantel-piece. The captain had given Bosy a cake of tobacco,

which he now proceeded to cut up for smoking; then he lighted his pipe, and sat down on his three-legged stool by the chimney corner. Time passed while Bosy smoked pipe after pipe, crooning to himself some half-inarticulate ditty between whiles. More than once he put fresh wood on the fire, more than once he opened the door and stood for a minute or two staring into the darkness outside. By-and-by he fell into a fitful sleep, with his back resting against the chimney-piece. When he awoke, the candles were spluttering themselves out, and the patch of sky visible through the unboarded space of the window was growing gray in the dawn. Bosy stood up, yawned, and stretched himself. The fire had burnt itself out, and he felt chilled to the marrow. He stood listening intently for a minute or two, but no sound reached him from below. It was evident that the strange gentleman still slept.

Most people in Bosy's place would have puzzled their brains with trying to guess what Captain Avory's motive could possibly be for acting as he had done; but Bosy never troubled himself about anything so abstruse as any one's motives; all that he cared about was the results which might accrue therefrom in so far as they affected himself.

As he stood there staring vaguely about him, and feeling more lonely in the dawn than he had felt in the dark, a longing came over him to seek the companionship of his fiddle. It was true he had promised Captain Avory that he would wait in silence till the sleeping man should awake, and that he would then steal away without letting him become aware that any living being was near him. But the man was not yet awake, otherwise Bosy would have heard him stirring. He might not awake for hours. Meanwhile, there was his old friend staring him in the face—it was light enough now for him to discern the fiddle where it hung from a nail in the corner—and seeming to ask, 'Master, what have I done?' and they had always so much to say to each other, those two! There was only one voice between them—that of the instrument—a voice evoked by Bosy's fingers; but sometimes it was Bosy who talked to the fiddle, and sometimes it was the fiddle which talked to Bosy. They understood each other so well.

Bosy could resist no longer. He took down the fiddle, touched it fondly with his lips, wiped it carefully with a silk handkerchief which he kept for the purpose, and then, after a little preliminary screwing-up of the strings, he sat down on his stool near the black fireplace, crossed one withered leg over the other, and began to play; but the score of what he played would have been found written nowhere save in his own fantastically constituted brain. Sometimes wild, fitful, and eerie, sometimes plaintive and almost sobbing, as it were, the notes rose and fell, and floated out on the soft gray of the October morning. His was the touch of untutored genius, which, under other circumstances, might perchance have given the world something it would not willingly have let die.

Bosy, sitting with shut eyes, had become so absorbed in his music as to have forgotten time

and place, his promise to Captain Avory, and even the existence of the man in the dungeon, when he was suddenly startled back into reality by hearing a voice, which seemed to come from a great distance, calling 'Help! help!'

Bosy started to his feet with wildly-starting eyes. For a moment it seemed to him as if he had heard a voice crying from the tomb; then everything came back to him in a flash. 'Help! help!' again called the voice.

'It's only the gentleman a-waking up,' said Bosy. 'It gave me a turn at first, though. How surprised and nonplussed he must have been when he opened his eyes and stared round him. I hope, though, he didn't hear me playing, because I'm supposed to be miles away from here at the present time; but it can't be helped, if he did.'

Again came another half-smothered cry for help. Bosy sniggered. 'Ho, ho! my noble prince, you'll have to cry out a long time before anybody hears you at Hoogies! You must make yourself as jolly as you can till midnight to-morrow, when I'll come and let you out. And maybe you've got some money about you, and maybe you won't forget to reward poor innocent Bosy for helping you to see daylight again! Ho, ho!'

He had risen, and was putting his fiddle into its green-baize covering, by this time. Then, after a last glance round, he crossed the floor lightly and opened the door. 'I'll take the sheep-track through Perry Wood,' he said. 'There won't be a soul about at this hour of the morning. By ten o'clock I shall be fifteen miles away.' He shut the door, turned up the collar of his coat, and with his fiddle under his arm, he set out, a last faint cry for help sounding in his ears as he left the house.

When Edward Saverne awoke from his long sleep and stared around, he felt that he must still be dreaming. Vague, confused visions and fantasies, some of them pleasant, and some of them the reverse, had been floating through his brain for some time before he awoke, and he felt that what he saw now was only one more vision added to the number—only, about this one there was an air of reality which had been lacking in all that had gone before. There was a strange pain and heaviness across his forehead, and yet the back of his head felt just as strangely light and wanting in balance. Again he stared about him, taking in his surroundings item by item, as far as he could make them out by the dim light of the candle, which was now burning to its end. Was he really awake, or was he still asleep? He pinched himself in the soft part of the arm, and then gave a sharp tug at one of his ears. The pain in both instances was enough to convince him that he was no longer dreaming. Then he sat up on his pallet, put his hands to his head, and tried to think, perceiving, as he did so, that he was still dressed in the tweed suit in which he had travelled down from London.

But how long ago was it since he came down from London? Was it days, or weeks, or even months ago? As well as his aching head would allow him, he set himself quietly to recall all that happened from the time he left the train

up to the moment when consciousness deserted him. First there was the meeting with his cousin Lucius at Mumpton Junction, and their drive through the dark to Trevenna Cottage. Next came his reception by his cousin's wife, who had welcomed him more warmly than he had thought she would have done. After that came supper in the cosy little dining-room, followed by a cigar and a glass of that delicious mulled port which Louisa knew so well how to concoct. But beyond that point, his thoughts refused to travel. He remembered well how he nearly fell asleep in his easy-chair in front of the cheery fire, while Louisa was playing softly in the adjoining room, and Lucius, who seemed to have become talkative all at once, was recounting some bird-nesting adventure of their youthful days: all this he remembered, and then followed an utter blank. Did he really fall asleep in that seductive easy-chair? and if so, had he slept till now? If that were the case, what place was this in which he had come back to consciousness; and why, and by what means, had he been brought here?

Very few moments sufficed for these thoughts to traverse his brain; but the questions he asked himself he was utterly powerless to answer. He was still staring round him like a dazed man, when suddenly the sound of music fell on his ears. As he listened, his first thought was that Mrs Avory must still be playing, and that perhaps he had not been asleep for more than a few minutes; but next moment he recognised that the notes to which he was listening were not those of a piano, but those of a violin. The music seemed to come from somewhere overhead, although that was a point respecting which he could not feel positive, but, in any case, it was evidently no great distance away.

The dizziness and strange feeling in his head had passed away in some measure by this time, and he now felt as if he dare venture to rise from his pallet without the fear of falling; but he sat for a few moments on the side of it before venturing to stand upright. Evidently the first thing to be done was to explore the strange place in which he found himself, and try to discover some means of egress. He rose and crossed to the empty cask, the top of which had been made to serve the purpose of a table. On it a candle was burning in a flat tin candlestick, with more candles and a box of matches close by. Near at hand were some provisions—a loaf of bread, a piece of cheese, some butter, together with a small jar of minced beef and one or two other articles. On a wooden stool stood two bottles, which looked as if they might contain wine or spirits. Wondering more and more, he took up the candlestick and began his exploration.

The music was still going on, and he now recognised that it came from somewhere overhead. Holding the light aloft, he made a survey of the ceiling. He found that it was of wood, and was supported on great beams and rafters, black with age and festooned with cobwebs. He concluded that, in all probability, it formed the floor of another room over the one in which he was. Next he made an examination of the walls. In the dim light, it had seemed to him that they were of plaster yellow-washed, as

the interiors of many houses are in country places; but he now discovered that they were composed of a sort of soft yellow sandstone, in which he could easily have cut his name with his pocket-knife. The floor, to all appearance, was of the same material as the walls. Was it possible, Edward Saverne asked himself, that he was shut up in some under-ground place, some vault or dungeon hewn out of the rock?

But, the means of egress? For a few minutes, in his surprise at other matters, he had forgotten that important point. There must surely be a door, or a staircase, or an opening of some kind somewhere. Two minutes later he sat down on the edge of his pallet, feeling dizzy and sick at heart. Neither door, nor window, nor staircase, nor opening of any kind was to be found. Again he asked himself, by whom and for what purpose had he been brought to this place. He started to his feet. Wherever he might be, he was not quite deserted and alone. The music told him that a human being of some kind was near at hand—one, surely, whose help he might claim. The thought sent a glow back to his heart. Hollowing both his hands, and putting them to his mouth, he called loudly for help, once, twice, and then stood with strained ears waiting for some response. But none came. Scarcely had the second cry left his lips when the music ceased—ceased as abruptly as it had begun, and was succeeded by profound silence.

After the lapse of a minute, he shouted again; but the silence remained unbroken. That his cry for help had been heard was indicated by the sudden cessation of the music. Why, then, had it not been responded to? Could it be that he had been brought here of set purpose and for some nefarious ends, such as he could not even guess at? and that he was to be left here, helpless and alone, till it should please those who had thus imprisoned him to set him at liberty? But who were the unknown people who had treated him thus? Could his cousin Lucius, and that blinking woman with the white eyelashes, his wife, have had any hand in it? And if so, to what purpose? What conceivable object could they have in view in treating him thus? None, none, that he could think of. A wild chaos of questions surged through his brain, to not one of which could he find a satisfactory answer. Again and again he lifted his voice for help, but with no other result than before.

Once he thought he heard a slight noise overhead, as if some one were cautiously crossing the floor; but as the sound was not repeated, it might only have originated in his own excited fancy. Although, of course, he did not know it, had the weather been at all stormy, he would have heard the heavy beat of the waves on the shore; but the night was utterly windless, and the tide came lapping up the sands as gently as though its tiny wavelets were the caressing fingers of a child.

He had not bethought himself till now to look at his watch. On consulting it, he found that it had stopped at four o'clock, doubtless for want of winding up. How many hours had passed since that time, or whether it was now day or night, he was unable to judge. After replacing his watch, he drew out his purse, and on opening it, he found that the gold and silver

there had been in it when he left London were still there, but that three notes for ten pounds each, which had been in one of the side-pockets, were not to be found. The robbery of his notes served only to deepen the mystery by which he was environed; otherwise, it affected him but little; his mind had far more serious things to dwell upon.

He thereafter made a more careful examination of his prison, searching minutely for the signs of some hidden door or secret opening; but to no purpose. Evidently, his first judgment was a correct one: he was immured in a dungeon cut bodily out of the living rock.

The candles, the supply of provisions, the wine, the jar of water in one corner, all seemed to indicate that the intention was to keep him a prisoner for some time. But why and with what object? That was the question which again and again reiterated itself in his brain. But all his self-questionings ended where they began—in a maze of utter bewilderment, in the midst of which he vainly strove to find the slightest clue. At intervals, he kept on calling for help, but only to be mocked by the silence, which seemed to weigh upon him with tenfold heaviness the moment it had swallowed up his cry. As hour passed after hour, this death-like silence, in conjunction with the gloom and solitude of his prison, and the feeling of being utterly cut off from and lost to the rest of the world, began to press upon him more and more, till at length he found himself wondering how much longer it would be possible to endure it without his brain giving way. He drank of the cold spring water in the jar eagerly and frequently, but beyond that he took neither bite nor sup. And so Time's pendulum swung slowly on.

MAKE-BELIEVES.

ADVERTISEMENTS, like many other things, have their uses and abuses, and we are not going to find fault with the long-established columns, which are of such service in supplying social wants, but with the dishonest practices of which the most respectable newspapers are ignorantly made the medium. There is abroad a plague of petty dishonesty, which trades upon and lives by the credulity, principally, of inexperienced women—educated ladies—who, by dire necessity, are ready to grasp at straws in the hope of saving themselves from penury. This is the class who not unfrequently have been known to spend their last pound to supply themselves with materials for work promised, or for stamps and fee, in order to secure an appointment offered. Of course, it will be alleged by those who thus prey upon human credulity that the applicants failed to come up to the standard of requirement. We do not write without data, or without having justly considered the ineligible; but it is to the system we demur; and the evidence we have before us comes from women of culture, whose ability is as indisputable as their testimony is unimpeachable. We therefore assert fearlessly, that infinitely more cruelty and more social injury are being perpetrated by these semi-professional,

semi-artistic traffickers, than has ever resulted from the dishonest puffing of the tradesman.

By the semi-artistic traffickers, ladies may be duped only to the extent of stamped, addressed envelopes, for which they are to be shown how to earn from two to eight shillings a day; or in some cases, merely a 'good addition to a small income.' This is to be done in several instances by the sale of a particular kind of button, mirrors, or watches, or some article of consumption in daily use, for which a commission will be given. The five shilling fee is to realise many more advantages, inasmuch as it promises a home with nominal duties to an educated lady not over twenty-five. Letters in the first instance are sent, to be followed by a personal interview at an address which shall be nameless. The response was made by a young lady, whom we shall call Miss Green, who took the precaution to inquire of an artisan living in the locality if he could give any information as to the owner of the said house. 'No, miss, I can't,' he said; 'but I wouldn't advise the like o' you to go there. I've seen ladies go in and come out w' nothing but disappointment in their faces. Ye won't say as I told ye, miss, but I can't a-bear to see it.'

A few weeks later, the same young lady noticed an advertisement in a London paper promising exceptional privileges, and desiring stamped envelope to be addressed for reply to J. Brown, Esq., — Street, Exeter. On this occasion, the services of a friend were called into requisition. She drove into the old city from the environs where she resided, thinking how much astonished Miss Green would be, could she see the position indicated by the address, but resolving, nevertheless, to satisfy herself, no less than save the inquirer from being duped beyond the extent of the twelve stamps, and stamped addressed envelope already forwarded.

Leaving her carriage at some distance and going a little way up the street, she was directed to a small dilapidated cottage at the top of a garden in the rear of a larger house, and probably rented for the business that was to be enacted there, under the assumption that it would all be done simply by correspondence emanating from the advertisement in a London paper. The door of the cottage was opened by a working woman, who said Mr Brown was away for a week; she was his servant. But the lady had seen more than enough in the heap of stamped envelopes which lay on the table, which were doubtless to yield a small income to an impecunious impostor, who had never even answered Miss Green's letter, or probably the letters of hundreds of other applicants.

Another artful and common trick is, when in addition to stamps for 'postage and preliminary inquiries,' as it is called, for the advantage of permanent occupation, a post-office order is demanded for materials supplied by themselves, with which the work is to be done. In one case, as much as three pounds was paid out on this condition, with the magnificent result to the payee of seventeen and sixpence in three months for work which probably brought two pounds more to her employer. An enormous trade has been carried on for the last two years in a spurious

kind of art production, for which materials were supplied and instruction given at its commencement for two pounds. Now the same privileges are offered for five shillings. We have before us, too, the statement of a lady who was the dupe of another similar advertisement. A carte-de-visite photograph was sent to her, which she enlarged to a picture eighteen by twenty inches, and painted in oils, for six shillings, the bait having been held out of having twenty a week supplied to her, should this first specimen prove satisfactory; which it is needless to say it did not, though the man sold it for twenty-five shillings! this pseudo-artist asserting, when remonstrance was attempted, that the art required no previous knowledge, and he was employing twenty girls at three and sixpence a week to produce such pictures, and not a penny more would he pay.

Of literary agencies, their name is legion, but their usefulness *nil*. Of course what we have to say will not apply to well-accredited agencies or Societies, but to those whose ostensible object is to furnish channels for amateur productions, but whose real object is to enrich their own pockets without regard to the interests of the payee. In these, as in advertisements of another class, it is often refined and educated women who are made the victims of this cowardly practice; and we think the statements which follow only require to be made public to enlist the consideration of chivalrous, high-minded men, who may, by their influence or generosity, protect women from this added element of anxiety in their struggle for existence.

For instance, assistance was required by advertiser from a lady accustomed to literary work, which could be supplied at home, and a liberal equivalent offered. After some preliminary correspondence, applicant was requested to call at the office in the Strand for further particulars. Instead of replying personally, she did so by deputy, the gentleman who volunteered to make what he deemed necessary inquiries being in the police department of the Civil Service. One statement made to him was, that the advertiser had a large newspaper *clientèle* to whom he constantly supplied articles written by women. This assertion being confirmed during the interview, a list of the papers was asked for, which numbered thirteen of the leading journals of the day. But the request having perhaps taken the advertiser a little by surprise, he asked impudently: 'Pray, sir, are you Miss —'s brother?'

'I am not.'

'Are you her solicitor?'

'I am not; but there is my address,' said the gentleman, putting down his card. 'I wish you good-morning; but I may add I think no lady would present herself at an office like this without inquiry by a gentleman to ascertain the nature of the transaction to which she was to pledge herself.'

Satisfied the whole thing was a hoax, the gentleman then despatched a detective to the various newspaper offices mentioned, only to find that in one solitary instance a lady had sent a short article from the office in question. Thereupon, a duly accredited officer was sent to take down the depositions of the applicant; but

the matter was carried no further, as the lady, being young, could not be prevailed on to appear in court.

To this statement may be appended another—namely, the advertisement of a certain Agency, or so-called Association for Governesses, Lady-housekeepers, &c. Applications to be made to a certain individual, who varies his addresses as well as his names, though both are in the north-western division. One of these is presumably his private residence; the other is an old-clothes shop, kept by an old woman, who receives the letters with their inclosures of half-guinea fee, which it is especially requested may be made by postal order. The police having had numerous complaints of the advertiser in question, it would be well that any person allured by his advertisements should communicate with Scotland Yard, to see if he is known to the police.

Another dodge is to ask for contributions to Christmas Annuals which have large circulation, and of which a specimen copy will be forwarded for twelve stamps. Accordingly, it arrives; and the shilling contributor finds she has thrown away her money on a magazine containing about as much matter as the *Argosy*, more than one half of which is filled by the writing of the pseudo-editor himself, and the rest mere penny-a-lining, which few, if any, would trouble themselves to read, though the advertiser probably makes a pretty good harvest out of his dupes.

Four years ago, the writer was subjected to similar wholesale robbery by sending manuscripts of carefully selected translated matter, regarding which some preliminary correspondence had taken place with an embryo editor who was projecting a new venture. The papers received high commendation, and payment was to be made when they were printed, according to a tariff not yet finally decided. Months passed away without any intimation or reply to letters; and the same gentleman who had acted in the 'permanent home employment' matter now called at the address to which the papers were sent, only to discover that the 'editor' had had a letter-box there for many weeks; but neither his name nor present habitation being known, the manuscripts were never forthcoming. As, in this age of new ventures, it is impossible to read all that comes out, in all probability these and hundreds of other papers sent by the unwary were utilised for the benefit of the advertiser, who must have laughed in his sleeve at those by whom he had made his dishonest gain.

Perhaps one of the most flagrant of these swindling transactions is the announcement how an income of one hundred and twenty pounds a year can be made without risk by sending a stamped addressed envelope to advertiser inclosing postal order for two shillings and sixpence, when the reply comes—'Do as I do.' Thus postal orders have their abuse as well as use, since no names can be traced where they are employed.

Besides the general, literary, and artistic beguiling advertisements referred to, there is another class which we will designate 'Social,' inasmuch as they are supposed to promote domestic comfort, and supply a social want to those who are not privileged to enjoy the happiness of family

life. These announcements generally appear towards the close of the London season, though they are tolerably frequent all the year round. We have no doubt that in some cases many advantages are to be met with in the houses of those who conscientiously fulfil the promises they have held out. With these we have nothing to do. But there are hundreds of designing people who have not the slightest intention from first to last of carrying out any of the stipulations made by those who have answered their advertisements, no matter how much they may have pledged themselves to their fulfilment.

We will cite one glaring specimen of this kind, replied to by two or three ladies of the writer's acquaintance, who journeyed very considerable distances to avail themselves of the special privileges offered in this 'Home in a Private Family.' The advertisement ran thus: 'A Lady residing with her father on their own estate in a prettily situated house, surrounded by pine-groves, offers a refined, delightful home during the summer months, or permanently. Good, well-appointed table. Carriage kept for use of visitor.' This statement was on inquiry supplemented by one from the 'lady' herself, who wrote that every exertion was used to make it a home of comfort on the most moderate terms; society, not emolument, being the advertiser's object. It was further said that the house was easy of access from the station. So it was—by means of a five-shilling cab fare; when one was landed at a detached red-brick gabled building, standing a few yards off the high-road, with a small overgrown garden in front, an empty little greenhouse on one side, and an orchard on the other. There certainly was a small pine-wood beyond the garden at one end; but it formed no part of the 'estate' in question, though it had another use to the inhabitants, inasmuch as its fine undergrowth of bilberries supplied the usual second course at the dinner-table of the old farmer and his daughter. This 'lordly dish,' with other unappetising and insufficient food, was placed on a table, which, like other pieces of rickety furniture in the house, was patched together, to save the cost of repairs. But there was little enough for use, and none for comfort anywhere, the two sofas from the parlour having been appropriated by a lady who was renting a sitting and bed room under the same roof, and who was also tended by the one maid-of-all-work of this ill-appointed, dirty house. The 'carriage' was an old shandrydan basket contrivance; and no matter what the state of the roads, it was washed but once a week; and when in its highest state of polish—that is, such parts as were polishable—it resembled only besmeared boots on a muddy day. The horse, too, was a rare antique, and was always groomed by the master, who forthwith went straight from the stable and sat himself down to supper, as probably he had been wont to do all his life. He also gathered the peas and performed other little outdoor services, before he took his daughter out for her duties in the 'carriage,' in which the guests were alternately offered a seat. So the drives culminated in a mile and a half on the same road day after day, and the drive to church on Sunday. But no one attached blame to the old

man; the daughter 'ruled the roast;' the honest Paterfamilias was the victim of his eccentric daughter's unscrupulous proceedings to edge herself into society in any way she could devise; whilst he was perpetually lamenting that 'things was not as they wuz when he were a boy.' The moral of all this is, to make careful inquiry ere parting with either postage-stamps or postal orders to advertisers whom we know nothing about.

OUR PARLOUR-MAID.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAP. II.

ELIZA's communication was not a very important one, merely referring to a small domestic matter which might have waited a little longer. But that was just like Eliza: she was so conscientious that she could not bear to run the slightest risk of failure in her duty. And when the slight domestic affair was disposed of, she still seemed inclined to keep me talking.

'Don't you like Mr Allardyce, ma'am?'

'I do indeed,' I said. 'Dr Lester is charmed with him.'

'I knew you would like him, ma'am. I'm so glad he called to-day. He was so kind and good to me, and you've been so kind and good to me, that I've often wished you knew each other. And Mrs Allardyce is a very nice lady too, ma'am; I'm sure you would like her if you knew her. Oh, just one minute, if you please, ma'am. I broke one of the claret glasses just now as I was carrying the tray down-stairs, and I couldn't rest until I told you. I'm so very sorry, ma'am; I hope you won't be angry with me.'

'Accidents will happen,' I said sagely. 'And now, Eliza, I really must go. I have left Mr Allardyce all by himself.'

'Shall I light the gas in the drawing-room, ma'am?'

'Why, no. It's not dark yet.'

'But when it is dark?'

'Certainly,' I said.

I found our guest standing in the middle of the plate-room with his hands in his pockets, softly whistling *Nancy Lee*.

'I must apologise for running away,' I said, as I began to lock up the press. 'I am sorry Dr Lester has been called away also. If you can find your way down to the drawing-room, I will put my keys away and follow you.'

'Thank you very much for affording me such a great pleasure,' he said courteously as he went out on to the landing. He descended the stairs, as I locked the outer door of the press. As I did so, I felt something craunch beneath my feet. I picked it up, and found it was a small piece of white wax. I did wonder for half a minute where it could have come from, as I never carried candles into the plate-room, which was lighted by gas, and nobody but myself had access to it. But the matter passed from my mind as I rejoined our visitor in the drawing-room and Charlie came in. Eliza brought in

coffee, after which we had a little music; and I could hardly believe Charlie when he said that the time had come for ordering the brougham to take our guest to the station. Mr Allardyce bade us a friendly farewell, and was most urgent in his desire that we should visit Oakwood before long. We promised to do so, and parted, delighted with our visitor, whose pleasant manners had charmed us both.

A few days afterwards I received the following letter:

OAKWOOD VICARAGE.

Saturday, July 6.

DEAR MRS LESTER—I trust you and Dr Lester have not forgotten your promise to come and visit us this summer. This glorious weather makes the country especially enjoyable; and Mrs Allardyce and I propose to give a garden-party on Thursday next, at which we should be very glad to have the pleasure of your company. Some famous local tennis-players have promised to come, with whom your husband ought to try his skill. In case Dr Lester's engagements should not permit him to remain here for the night, there is a train for town at nine p.m. We trust you will come early, and we will meet you at the station.—With kind regards, I remain very sincerely yours,

WENTWORTH ALLARDYCE.

After some little discussion, we agreed to go, but decided that it would be better not to stay all night. So I wrote a note to that effect, and despatched Eliza with it to the post, telling her that Mr Allardyce had invited us to visit Oakwood, and that we were going on Thursday. The good girl was delighted to hear it.

On the morning of Thursday, my husband started very early on his rounds, while I made an elaborate toilet in honour of the occasion; and by twelve o'clock we had reached Waterloo, and were in the train for Oakwood. The only other person in the carriage was an elderly clergyman, very gray and fragile-looking, but with a good kind face. He asked me whether I liked the window up or down; and from remarking on the fine weather and one thing and another, he and Charlie soon got into conversation. People always talk to my husband when he is on a journey. I suppose his genial face and manner attract them. At all events, I never knew him travel any distance without somebody entering into conversation with him. He and the clergyman began discussing politics, and sympathised most cordially, being both ardent Conservatives. Then they talked on general topics for a few minutes, and then rambled on to continental experiences. Our companion told us that he had a living in Surrey, but that his health had been so bad latterly that he had been compelled to travel abroad for three months, his duty being taken by a clerical friend meanwhile.

'I was in Manchester for many years,' he said. 'I had a very populous parish, and the work was so hard that I was glad to have the offer of a quiet country vicarage. But Oakwood lies so low, and there are so many trees, that it is sadly unhealthy.'

'Oakwood?' I involuntarily asked.

'Yes, Oakwood in Surrey, near Guildford. Do you know the place?'

'We are on our way there now,' I said, 'to a garden-party at the vicarage.'

'At the vicarage?' he repeated, looking very much astonished.

'Yes. I suppose there are two churches in the place—yours, and another?'

'No, my dear madam, only one—St Paul's, of which I am the vicar.'

I never felt so puzzled in my life; and he looked equally bewildered.

'But the vicar of Oakwood is Mr Allardyce.'

'My name is Wentworth Allardyce.' He took up his travelling-bag and showed me his name and address engraved on a small silver plate. Charlie and I exchanged glances. Our companion was evidently a gentleman, and we could not think of doubting his assertion. On the other hand, who was the other charming Mr Allardyce?

'Have you a son or any other relative of the same name?' asked Charlie. 'A young man with dark hair and particularly agreeable manners?'

'I have no children. My wife has been dead for years. My only nephew, John Allardyce, is in Canada with his regiment.'

'Well, really, this is most incomprehensible!' said Charlie, astounded. 'Our parlour-maid, Eliza Willis, whom you recommended to us'—

'My dear sir,' said the clergyman, looking at him as if he thought he must be an escaped lunatic, 'I never had a servant called Eliza Willis in my life; and I certainly never recommended her to you or any one else.'

'I am Dr Lester of Notting Hill,' said Charlie, producing his card. 'Really, this is a most extraordinary thing. We engaged a parlour-maid about three months ago, who said she had been living at Oakwood Vicarage with Mr Allardyce. She said he was then at Folkestone; so we wrote there, and received an excellent character'—

'Excuse my interrupting you, but I never was at Folkestone in my life.'

'And a few days ago, a "Mr Allardyce" called to see her as he was passing through London. He spent the evening with us, and we were both delighted with him. To-day we are going, at his invitation, to a garden-party at Oakwood Vicarage.'

'Then, my good sir, I fear you have been imposed upon,' answered the clergyman. 'Some unprincipled person must have made use of my name. I have been abroad for three months, and am just returning to Oakwood. I assure you, I have not the slightest intention of giving a garden-party; my bachelor household does not admit of gaieties of that kind.'

'O Charlie, our plate!' I cried, as a suspicion flashed across me like lightning. And my husband turned pale.

'We have a good deal of plate,' I hurriedly explained. 'This man, who passed himself off for you, professed to admire it very much; and we showed him all we had, and, O dear! how we locked it up, and everything.'

'I should fear he had designs upon it. It is a most mysterious affair all through. Of course you have only my assertion that I am Wentworth Allardyce'—

'We don't doubt that for one moment,' said my husband.

'But if you come to Oakwood,' went on the vicar, 'my parishioners will be able to certify that I am their vicar, and no other.'

'Indeed, I think we ought to go back to London at once,' said my husband, who was evidently uneasy. 'I fear we have been duped by a persuasive stranger, and that this garden-party pretence is only a dodge to get us out of the way. Our house is probably now being robbed.'

'But, Charlie, there is Eliza!'

'Mr Allardyce knows nothing about her. Her character must have been a forgery.'

'So it must,' I said, feeling completely overwhelmed. 'Oh, I wish the train would stop, so that we could get out and go back to London.'

'It stops before long at Marsham junction,' said Mr Allardyce. 'You can catch a London train there.'

'Is not wax used to take the impression of a key?' I asked, as another recollection came to me. 'I found a piece of wax on the floor of the plate-room, Charlie, after—that man had been there.'

'Then we may say good-bye to our Queen Anne tea-service!' said my husband grimly, as the train gave a warning whistle.

'This is Marsham,' said Mr Allardyce, letting down the window. 'I trust you will let me know how you found things at home,' he added kindly, as we got out. We gave him a hurried farewell, and dashed down the platform, where a porter told us the London train was just going.

We had a fearful scramble, and, quite out of breath, were bundled into a carriage at the very end of the train, which was already moving. It was third-class and not over-clean, but we were only too glad to get in at all.

During the brief journey back, Charlie told me what he intended to do; and as he did not think it would be safe for me to go back to the house at first, I agreed—though very unwillingly—to wait at a neighbour's until he came for me. He took a hansom at Waterloo, and we dashed homewards at great speed. At the police-station nearest to our house, Charlie got out, and after a few minutes' conversation with the inspector, we resumed our way. Four constables, under the command of a sergeant, were to follow in another cab immediately. We got out at the end of our road, which the policemen were also to do, so as not to alarm any one who might be in our house with the sound of wheels stopping at the door. Charlie left me at my friend's house, and turned back to meet the cab full of policemen which was just in sight. My friend's house was nearly opposite our own, and, after a hurried explanation, I took my stand behind the curtains in the dining-room window to watch, feeling quite sick with apprehension. In front of our house, hitched by the reins to the lamp-post, was a small truck, drawn by one horse, such as might have belonged to any respectable tradesman; and that was the only external sign of anything about to happen.

I saw Charlie and his company come down the street. One policeman quietly descended into the area, and stood there ready to arrest

anybody who attempted to escape that way; two remained on guard outside the front door; the others slipped off their boots, and Charlie noiselessly admitted himself and them with his latch-key.

I had watched for about twenty minutes in an agony of dread, when I saw the door open, and my husband came out. He was by my side almost immediately, and told me what had passed. Nobody met them in the hall, and they made their entry quite unperceived. It may be wondered at that no one was on the watch to give the alarm. But the plate-room was at the back of the house, away from the road; and besides, we were supposed to be safe at Oakwood by this time—where, but for a most fortunate accident, we should have been—and 'Mr Allardyce' and his gang thought themselves perfectly secure from interruption. Charlie and his party crept cautiously up the stairs, hearing voices and laughter coming from above. On the first landing was a wooden piano-case, in which ingenious and innocent receptacle our plate was to be packed, and put on the truck which was waiting at the door; in which guise it might safely be trusted to elude the notice of every policeman in London. The thieves were so secure in their fancied safety, that when the door was pushed open and they found themselves surrounded by the policemen with drawn truncheons, they were blank with amazement. 'Mr Allardyce'—not in clerical costume this time—had opened the press with the false keys, which the wax impressions he had taken enabled him to make. A second man, the driver of the truck at the door, was standing by with a chisel; and my saintly parlour-maid, laughing at the ruse which had been successfully practised on her master and mistress, was helping the housemaid to roll up the plate in green baize bags.

'Mr Allardyce' drew a revolver; but before it could be discharged, he was stunned by a blow from the sergeant's truncheon. The others were quickly secured, and escorted by the policemen, were driven off to the nearest police court, to be charged before the sitting magistrate. Our plate was saved; but it had the narrowest escape in the world. Only ten minutes more, and the thieves would have got clear off with their booty, and we should never have seen a vestige of it again.

The conspirators had contrived to send cook on an errand which would detain her an hour or two, soon after Charlie and I left. The housemaid—who, it will be remembered, came to me through Eliza—was in the plot; and they thought themselves safe. The parlour-maid in whom I trusted so implicitly was a member, *sub rosa*, of the swell-mob, of which distinguished profession 'Mr Allardyce,' who had received a good education, was one of the brightest ornaments. He had written the letter from Folkestone by means of which she entered my service. Eliza derived her knowledge of Oakwood and of Mr Allardyce's affairs through having once stayed there for a few weeks with a family in whose service she was. For four or five years she had played a game similar to that she had tried on me; getting mistresses to confide in her, and then, when she had found out where their plate and valuables were kept,

betraying the house to her accomplices. These burglaries remained profound mysteries, thanks to her consummate hypocrisy; her complicity in them never having been suspected. Her entering my service was not the result of chance, but the consequence of one of the gang one day hearing a remark that Dr Lester of Notting Hill had some valuable plate. At first, she and her confederates thought of carrying it off in a night attack; but the difficulties in the way, thanks to Charlie's wise precautions, caused them to change their plans, and they concluded to try the stratagem I have recorded.

The four were tried, and each sentenced to long terms of penal servitude. A few days after the trial was concluded, I was astonished to receive a call from my old housemaid Jane, who had been dismissed for dishonesty. She told me that she had only just heard of what had taken place; and that that had emboldened her to come and tell me that she was sure Eliza, knowing her box would be searched, had purposely placed articles belonging to me in it that very morning, to insure her dismissal. She said that one or two things Eliza had said to her indicated very little regard for other people's property; but, finding that Jane was honest, Eliza pretended to turn it all off as a joke. But from that time forth she no doubt made up her mind to get rid of Jane, as an obstacle in the way of her schemes. It is needless to say that I at once took Jane back into my service, and that she is with me now.

We had had a lesson. We sent all our plate off to the bank the next morning. People who come to dine with us, see a good deal of silver, as they imagine; but it is chiefly electro-plate. One attempted burglary is quite enough in a lifetime.

We renewed the acquaintance with the real Mr Allardyce, so strangely begun, and he is now one of our most valued friends. We often joke about his 'garden-party' which never came off. But if our parlour-maid had succeeded in her nefarious designs, there would really have been no joke in the matter.

A TALE OF A SIXPENNY TELEGRAM.

THE sixpenny telegram may prove a priceless boon to the British nation at large, but at present it stands to my individual mind as the symbol of, something intensely disagreeable. On that inauspicious first of October when the new arrangement was thrust upon us, I received a message, handed in at a London office, which ran as follows:

'To FREDERICK AUGUSTUS SMITH-SIMPKINS, 56 Langham Hotel.—Bring Digby on Saturday. JENKINS.'

A very innocent and ordinary communication, to all appearance, and yet that innocent-seeming message was the means of breaking off one marriage, of precipitating another, and of losing me a fortune!

The sender had curtailed his name and omitted his address in order to compress his telegram within the sixpenny limit; but there was no

doubt in my mind as to the identity of the sender. I knew only one man named Jenkins—my mother's eldest brother, Albert Victor-Emmanuel Smith-Jenkins. The wisdom which declined to pay an extra halfpenny on each of those high-sounding baptismal designations was certainly to be extolled. It was only a pity, I thought, that they could not be similarly suppressed on all the other occasions of life. The taste which our family has always displayed for a lengthy and would-be imposing nomenclature has been anything but a source of pleasure to me; for nearly five-and-twenty years I have positively groaned under the burden of my own four names; and the tiny tax levied upon the Smith-Paynes, the Smith-Jenkinses, and the Smith-Simpkinses, is the only thing connected with the new telegraphic regulations which wins my cordial approval.

To return to my uncle and his message. It was perfectly plain and intelligible, in spite of its brevity. A favourite niece, to whom he had been lately playing the part of father, was to be married next Saturday, from his house, to a baronet. I had been invited to the wedding; and here was a further request that I would bring young Digby, a mutual acquaintance, with me. It was a somewhat odd and informal manner of inviting him; but my uncle was an eccentric man, accustomed to do things of this sort. He had returned within the last few months from a trip to the antipodes, accompanied by a widowed sister and her daughter, the Australian belle who was to be married on Saturday. The young lady, or her mother, had evidently contrived to captivate the old gentleman during the short time they had known him, for he had already signified his intention of leaving her the half of his fortune, provided that she married to his satisfaction. This condition she was just about to fulfil, so that her inheritance might be regarded as perfectly safe. The other moiety of his property was to be bequeathed to me, and in my case there was a condition of general good behaviour, without any specific demand.

I had never heard Uncle Bert speak of Digby, and therefore had no idea what terms of intimacy they were upon. My own acquaintance with him was of a somewhat casual though very pleasant sort. Three seasons ago, I joined four or five other men in hiring a Highland moor, and he had been one of our party. I was so unfortunate during our sojourn in those remote regions as to dislocate my ankle; and in the absence of regular medical aid, Digby showed himself a skilful amateur surgeon, and afterwards relinquished many hours of sport with his friends, in order to sit by my sofa and help me to while away the tedium of my idle days. We all liked him exceedingly for his never-failing *bonhomie*, and for a certain charm of presence and manner that no one could resist. I always understood that he came of a good old

stock, but knew very little about his people or belongings. When our party broke up, he told us that he was going to sail for Melbourne in a few weeks; and we each shook him heartily by the hand and wished him a prosperous voyage.

I never set eyes on the man again from that day to the 30th of September last. I had been up in town for a week, and had been dining that evening with my old chum, Bob Collier, a good fellow, but gifted with an unsurpassed genius for plunging himself into scrapes and for dragging in his friends after him. After dinner we adjourned to a certain well-known music-hall. Bob eschews the British drama, and patronises no public place of amusement in London other than a music-hall, on principle—at least he says so. We had not taken our seats more than five minutes, when we simultaneously recognised Digby's noticeable face only a few yards away from us. I went up to him and tapped him on the shoulder, and he remembered us both in an instant. I said to myself, after a little scrutiny of his features, that he must have been living his life pretty fast out there in Melbourne. The last three years had set their mark upon him; but he was still strikingly handsome, and his manner was just as bright and gay and genial as ever. We spent the rest of the evening together, and in the course of our talk it came out that Digby had met Uncle Bert in Australia.

'And do you know my cousin, Fanny Dasher, who is to be married on Saturday?' I inquired.

'I have met her,' he answered, and then began rather hurriedly to speak of something else.

We separated soon after midnight, Bob reminding me, as we said good-night, of an engagement I had made with him for the following week. He was the owner of a small yacht, and we were to take a cruise in her, weather permitting, after his return from a few days' shooting in Essex. The yacht was then undergoing some repairs, but by that time she would be ready for us at Erith.

'Now, don't throw me over, old man,' Bob entreated plaintively, 'with a tale about important business, &c., &c. I shall be back in town in a week or ten days, and shall depend upon you.'

'All right, Villikins,' I answered, giving him the nickname which, for certain reasons connected with a then popular song, we had fastened upon him in our school-days. 'I shall be in town again, too, before then, and you will find me as usual at the *Langham*.'

This arrangement having been satisfactorily concluded, we departed our several ways.

The above is a brief account of my acquaintance with Lancelot Digby: the story of my uncle's connection with him has yet to be told.

It was on the following morning that I received the telegram; that was on Thursday, and the wedding was to take place in two days. I wrote a note to Digby, at the address he had given me, intimating my uncle's desire that he should grace Miss Fanny Dasher's nuptials, and then sallied into the street to look up a friend. At the very first corner, I came suddenly face to face with

Digby again, and repeated the substance of my now superfluous note.

'That is a very funny joke,' he said, looking at me with an odd expression; 'and if you knew all I knew you would think it a good deal funnier.'

'It's no joke at all,' I said. 'Here's the telegram.' I happened to have thrust it into my pocket in a fit of absent-mindedness, instead of tearing it up, the most natural proceeding, and now drew it out and showed it to him. We stood in the doorway of a tobacconist's shop, and he stared at the four words of the message and at the sender's name for some moments, in apparent bewilderment; then his eyes flashed with sudden comprehension, and he broke out into a loud fit of laughter.

'What is there to laugh at in this?' I exclaimed.

'I beg your pardon,' he said, quickly sobering down. 'There is really nothing to laugh at. I am a fool. I—I don't know whether I shall be able to go; but I'm much obliged to him for the compliment all the same.' And then he hastily left me, saying that he had an appointment to keep.

I returned to my home in Liverpool on Friday evening, without having seen or heard anything more of Digby. Uncle Bert lived at Southport; and the next morning I took a train which would give me time to reach his house about half-past ten. I had just entered an unoccupied first-class carriage, when I saw Digby on the platform, arrayed in a wedding garment of faultless cut and fit. I beckoned to him from the window, and he came in and took his seat beside me. One glance at the man showed me something unusual in his look and manner. He talked in a distraught, unconnected fashion, and once or twice broke out into snatches of colonial songs. He was paler, too, than ordinary, and, while lighting a cigar, his hand trembled so that he could hardly hold the match. I did not like these signs at all, and began to feel vaguely uncomfortable and apprehensive.

We took a cab from the station to Balmoral Lodge, one of the largest and most imposing-looking houses in Southport, representing the accumulated gains of three generations of Liverpool shipbrokers. For years, there had only been one thing wanting to complete my uncle's earthly happiness—the affiliation by marriage of our family to the titled class. This dream of his life was now about to be realised; and I pictured to myself the way in which he would come forward to receive us, his normal pomposity aggravated tenfold, in order to do credit to this occasion and to his 'friend Sir Marmaduke Fitzhugh.' He was not visible, however, when we entered, although we heard his voice in the distance anathematising the butler for having put out the wrong claret. The page-boy requested us to walk up into the drawing-room; and we followed him across a wide hall, adorned with beautiful ferns and flowering plants.

Digby tramped noisily across the marble floor, switching to right and left the gloves that should have been upon his hands, reckless of the flowers; and at the foot of the stairs he contrived to throw down a stand of sticks and umbrellas with a dreadful clatter.

'Gently!' I whispered reprovingly.

He turned upon me with a half-laugh, and his lips parted to emit some indistinct guttural sounds. I really believe that he was on the very point, just then, of breaking out into one of his camp-fire songs. He preceded me on the staircase, and just before we reached the top he turned round and caught me by the shoulder. His face was flushed now, instead of being pale, and there was a wild light in his eyes.

'I say, old man,' he said, 'how would you feel if you were coming to this wedding in the character of Young Lochinvar, or the Master of Ravenswood, or something of that sort? You wouldn't manage to look quite so dour and well-behaved then, I fancy.'

I don't know how I looked, but I remember very well how I felt. Digby's strange words and reckless bearing seemed to threaten some horrible catastrophe, and I could not rid myself of the idea that I was in some way responsible for him. In another instant the page had thrown open the drawing-room door and announced us. It was too late then to turn back or to try to make my escape. I must go through with the adventure to the bitter end.

There were over a dozen persons in the room when we entered, besides the six bridesmaids. Mrs Dasher was not present; she was assisting in the adornment of the bride, and her place as hostess was, for the moment, filled by a Mrs Cochrane, who seemed to be a sort of second cousin to nearly everybody there. This lady was all smiles and amiability, as befitted the occasion. She welcomed me effusively, although I had never met her more than twice in my life, and said something soft and pretty to my companion, who was quite unknown to her.

I had taken very little interest in this wedding, either in bridegroom or bride. I suppose that no woman could have been present at such a ceremony without being at the pains to make herself acquainted beforehand with a dozen details, of which I remained contentedly ignorant. My masculine cursoriness took everything for granted. Perhaps I might have concerned myself more about those romantic accessories which popular imagination has grouped around the every-day fact of a wedding, if the bride had ever inspired me with any interest. But I had seen very little of her during the few months she had been in England, and although we were first cousins, we were almost strangers to each other. I was told that she had been the belle of her native township in Australia; but neither her looks, style, nor manner commended themselves to my taste. The bridegroom I had not even seen. The match had been made up by my uncle, somewhat hastily, and I suspected that it was more or less of a *mariage des convenances*.

For the present, I was too much occupied in watching Digby to have thoughts or eyes for anybody else's concerns. The prettiest of the bridesmaids came up and began to talk to me, and I answered her at random, while my eyes wandered off every other minute in his direction. He was apparently behaving very well, talking politely to a feminine fogey, the bride's great-aunt. After a while, I noticed that he glanced again and again through the partially closed door.

What was the meaning of that? I discourteously abandoned my young lady, and took a seat on the opposite side of the room, where I also could command a view of whatever that half-open door might reveal. It revealed nothing—nothing but the empty corridor. Presently, it occurred to me that the time was going on very fast. The bride must speedily appear, unless we intended to drive the ceremony perilously near twelve o'clock.

A lady saw me looking at the clock, and said: 'Oh, you need not be afraid. I was never at a wedding yet where the bride was not dreadfully late, and yet the service was always over in time. There's a special providence to watch over marriages.'

'Or a cunning demon,' whispered an incorrigible bachelor at my elbow.

Just then, a late guest, who had missed his train, came in. His entrance caused a little bustle; and when it had subsided, I looked round, and saw that Digby had disappeared. A moment later, and our ears were greeted with an hysterical scream.

'Ah, poor darling! it has been too much for her nerves,' the ladies exclaimed, and rushed out pell-mell into the corridor; while the men looked at each other in bewildered discomfort.

I followed the feminine part of the company, and beheld my cousin Fanny, arrayed in her bridal robes, reclining in a fainting-fit upon a sort of divan, and partially supported by Lancelot Digby's arm.

There was the usual fatuous attempt to suffocate the sufferer by crowding around her, and the customary panic-stricken cries for water, smelling-salts, a fan. Some one asked, 'Where is her mother?' and as soon as the words were uttered, Mrs Dasher appeared upon the scene. She had gone to her room to make her own toilet, after putting the finishing touches to her daughter's, and had hastily thrust herself into a gown of gorgeous crimson satin, as soon as she heard Fanny's scream. As she made her way through the sympathetic group, her eye fell upon Digby, and then she, too, uttered an exclamation, and sank down pale and breathless upon the nearest chair. The same instant, we heard my uncle's voice shouting out a concluding admonition to the butler, as he ascended the stairs.

'Come, come,' he said, bursting in upon us; 'it's time to go—not a moment to spare. Keep your hysterics till afterwards. What the'— And then he also became white and speechless.

This promised to be diverting. Was he going to follow the example of his sister and niece, and collapse in a fainting-fit? I looked round, and saw that there was no chair at hand. If he fainted, he must fall to the ground, unless some of the ladies were kind enough to sustain him in their arms. But he did not faint; his pallor was only the pallor of a white-heat rage. Quickly recovering his power of speech, he broke out into a storm of incoherent anathemas; then suddenly remembering the presence of the ladies and the necessity for preserving appearances, reiterated once more that there was not a moment to spare, and drove us all down-stairs before him, and into the

carriages that were waiting at the door. I never knew exactly what became of Lancelot Digby at this point, or how he got out of the house. He had ceased to support the robust form of the fainting bride, who was borne off to her own room by her mother and a bevy of excited maid-servants; and in the general confusion, I lost sight of him.

We found the bridegroom and his best-man waiting at the church. The sight of Sir Marmaduke Fitzhugh's puny figure and Dutch-doll ineane face led me to think that if Fanny Dasher had consented to marry him for his name and position, despising him in her heart, it was 'not to her credit; and if she did not despise him, her own taste was truly to be deplored. The service was to have commenced at eleven; at half-past, the bride had not appeared. The two clergymen who were to officiate conferred anxiously with the gentlemen of our party, and the poor little bridegroom's distress and nervousness were pitiable to witness. The minutes went by—our watches pointed to the quarter now; it was perfectly evident that there could be no wedding to-day. Nevertheless, we lingered in the church for another five minutes, to see whether anything would happen. Then the clergymen took off their surplices; and the luckless wedding guests, with the still more luckless bridegroom, re-entered the carriages, amid the jeers of the crowd that had collected round the church doors, and drove back to Balmoral Lodge.

Uncle Bert and his sister received us upon our return with a discomfiture which they tried very ineffectually to conceal. Fanny, they said, was suffering from a nervous attack, and had declared that she could not go to church that day—could not, or would not, it was much the same thing with a young lady suffering from an affection of the nerves. So the disappointed bridegroom went back to his hotel, and all the guests departed, with the exception of one or two old friends who were staying in the house.

But what on earth was the explanation of this singular fiasco? Why had this terrible wedding guest been invited? Above all, why was the outrage of his presence to be visited upon my head?

My uncle's fury burst out with the utmost violence as soon as we were left alone together.

'Why, you asked me to bring him, yourself,' I said.

'Don't fling a lie in my very face, sir!' he retorted; and I found it impossible to make him listen to a word of reason.

'It was a very clever trick of yours to bring that man here,' he shouted out after me as I was leaving the house; 'but you will find that you have outwitted yourself. You will regret that you did it, to the last day of your life.'

On my way back to Liverpool, the thought occurred to me, was there really anything wrong with that telegram, which my uncle so strenuously denied all knowledge of? I had unluckily destroyed it by this time, and so had only my bare word to urge against him. Was it a stupid hoax, perpetrated by some idiotic acquaintance, or a clever device of Digby's to gain entrance to my uncle's house?

I had not long to wait for a solution of this

part of the puzzle. Arriving at home, I found a letter from Bob Collier, which I transcribe at length :

DEAR SIMPKINS—I presume you got my telegram all right on Thursday. I lost no time in sending off one of the new sixpenny ones, but don't see that they are such a wonderful improvement, especially when you have to wire to fellows with names like yours. I shall be back in town on Friday or Saturday week, and hope to find you at the *Langham*, per agreement. Will Digby be able to join us? He seems a very agreeable fellow, of the quiet and steady sort. [Bob's perception of character was not very keen.] I hate going out with a man whom you're not sure of, and who is as likely as not to lug you into some scrape. Send me a line before the end of the week.—Yours ever, B. C., *alias* 'VILLIKINS.'

P.S.—Be sure to give my most affectionate regards to your dear uncle; you know he has always doted upon me.

So it was Bob who had sent the message, and the post-office clerks had converted 'Villikins' into 'Jenkins.' Why had I not connected him with the muddle and mystification before, by a natural association of ideas? It may be his fault or it may be his fate, but if he has only so much as his little finger in any affair, it is sure to end in an imbroglio. This is the worst turn, however, that you have ever done me yet, Master Bob, and I don't find it easy to forgive you. Why need he have telegraphed all my four names at length, and then rigidly curtailed all the important part of the communication within the sixpenny limit, as if an extra penny or three-halfpence were a matter of vital consequence to him? Why, indeed? It was just one of his usual fatuous proceedings, which no one could have explained, not even himself.

That same evening, I was passing the entrance to the North-western Station, when I saw a cab drive up, from which alighted Lancelot Digby, and a lady so closely veiled and muffled as almost to elude recognition. Nevertheless, I felt certain that it was my cousin Fanny; and following the couple warily in the crowd, I saw them enter a first-class carriage in the up-train that was just on the point of starting.

Next day, it was known all over Liverpool and Southport that Fanny Dasher had eloped with a fortune-hunter from Australia, on the very day on which she was to have been married to Sir Marmaduke Fitzhugh.

By degrees, I learned other details, which made the story clearer to my understanding. Fanny Dasher had possessed a fortune of her own before she had had any thought of inheriting Uncle Bert's money; and he had found her, upon his arrival in New South Wales, surrounded by a swarm of interested suitors, of whom Lancelot Digby was the most favoured. He had carried her off to England, away from them all, intending that she should make a brilliant marriage, of which he would reap some of the honour and glory. Digby followed her, without, I believe, any settled plan of action, but trusting to his handsome face and the chapter of accidents; and the result justified his faith. Many of Fanny's friends commiserated her for having become his

prey; but their pity was scarcely deserved. She was twenty-five years old, and she knew the world—knew it much better than most young women of her age. As for Digby, he might not be a very eligible partner, but he was externally one of the most charming men and perfect gentlemen whom it has ever been my lot to meet.

It is I who am really most entitled to commiseration. Uncle Bert will never forgive me for my involuntary part in the affair, and has already willed away all his property to charities. He persists in believing that I aided and abetted Digby, in the hope of profiting by Fanny's disgrace, and stigmatises my account of the telegram as a mystification, if not something worse. I called upon Bob Collier to corroborate my statement, but with the worst success. Such a witness only served to damage my case. My uncle has always detested him, and promptly saluted him as conspirator number three.

This is the conclusion of my story—a most unsatisfactory one, so far as I am concerned. They say that all vexations and calamities carry with them some counterbalancing good, in the shape of wisdom and experience. I don't know that my late disagreeable adventure has brought me any such gain, unless it be a deepened impression of the value and beauty of brevity in proper names. I now write myself plain Frederick Simpkins. From this time forward, let none of my acquaintances address me as Frederick Augustus Smith-Simpkins, on pain of the cut direct.

'PAPA WILL PAY.'

'It is all right; papa will pay.'

Few people have any notion of the misery wrought in many a middle-class family by the conduct of some shopkeepers in the matter of juvenile debtors. A lad, indeed, only needs to have impudence enough and heartlessness enough to obtain any bauble he craves for, so ready is this class of tradesmen to accord credit to the sons of well-to-do parents. We say 'sons' advisedly; for no instance of a young lady bringing trouble into the domestic circle in this way has ever come under our notice. Juvenile debtors of the fair sex may certainly exist, but they are rare; whilst so easy is it for a middle-class boy to get over head and ears into debt, to say nothing of pawning anything in the shape of family valuables he can lay hands on, that we are compelled to believe the habit of obtaining goods on the one hand and of relying on the dictum, 'Papa will pay' on the other, to be sadly common. Here are a few facts.

The youthful A and B, aged respectively eleven and thirteen, took it into their heads one afternoon to quit their homes and put up at a little country inn, some distance off, whither their parents, middle-class London folks, living on between two and three hundred a year, had once taken them to as a holiday treat. Now, the proprietor of this house must have been perfectly well aware that something was wrong. Children are never sent to inns alone under any circumstances; and people of small means would never dream of putting themselves to the expense of hotel accommodation for the sake of affording two boys a little treat. The duty of the host

and hostess was as plain as day; they should have interrogated the lads, and at once written to their parents. Instead of doing anything of the kind, they gave them supper, a bedroom, and breakfast next day, and would, I daresay, have kept their young customers for weeks. In the meantime, the boys' non-appearance had of course created the gravest alarm; telegrams were sent to all the police stations in London, and all kinds of harm were supposed to have happened to them. With the landlady, it was simply a question of papa will pay. And when the boys were accidentally discovered, of course papa did pay. Ought such a creditor to have received one farthing?

Take the case of C, a promising lad of seventeen, who wished to have a tricycle, a handsome one too. 'It is all right,' smiled the youth, to the too ready shopkeeper; 'papa will pay.' The delightful machine was brought home, where it was supposed to be a loan, or hired upon savings out of weekly pocket-money, and so on. Your juvenile debtor is of course obliged to part company with truth at an early stage of his career. The tricycle is enjoyed till papa is dunned, and the truth comes out. And of course, hard as it is to a man in such circumstances to spare the money, yet, on reiterated promises of better behaviour from the culprit, the debt is paid. Not that the law compels a father to discharge such claims; on this subject it is very explicit: 'Infants, when not living with their parents, may contract to a certain extent, namely, for necessities.' But in this case the 'infant' was living under the paternal roof, so the objects contracted for were certainly not necessities. Take the case of Master D, a lad living in a country town with his father, who contrived to run up bills to the extent of many pounds for nicknacks, luxuries in the way of eating and drinking, fopperies in the shape of haberdashery. These tradespeople were within a few hundred yards of the supposed guarantor. Why did they quietly supply the goods and hold their peace? Just because they knew that papa would pay.

But why, it may be asked, does Paterfamilias act thus weakly towards those who show so little conscience in their dealings with himself? The reasons are obvious. No right-minded man can support the burden of debt, and the debts incurred by his children are felt to be as much of a disgrace as his own. Nor can he endure the thought that hard-working tradespeople, however unscrupulously they may have supplied the goods, should be wronged. A tricycle can of course be returned, but not an object of a more perishable nature; there is a dead loss to the purveyor. A man, moreover, of susceptible mind does not like to publish to the world that so far the moral training of his son is a failure. He hopes to soften the boy's heart and bring him to a better way of thinking. Again, men do not like to be spoken ill of, as they assuredly would be if, in the first place, they cannot prevent their children from getting goods on credit, and in the second, they shake off all responsibility concerning such wrongdoing.

It seems to us that much as may be said on behalf of the parents, little excuse can be made for the tradesmen. We may bring up our boys

as carefully as we will, yet we can never feel quite sure that some latent germ of evil may not make itself apparent at some time or other. But the shopkeeper knows perfectly well what he is about, the pawnbroker also. Would respectable parents, for instance, if reduced to some unexpected strait, send a child of thirteen to the pawnshop with a family relic in the shape of plate or jewellery? Explicit as is the law, it is not nearly explicit enough on the subject of juvenile debtors. Why should not an order, written and signed by the head of the family, be exacted of a minor when purchasing luxuries, instead of the careless, 'Papa will pay?' Why should not some such precaution be obligatory on the pawnbroker also? Worthy parents cannot help their sons turning out reprobates; more's the pity. The most anxious-minded father in the world cannot have a perpetual eye on the doings of his children. But juvenile debtors would be rarer and many a parent's burden lighter, if a boy belonging to the middle ranks of life could no longer obtain so much as a gooseberry tart on the strength of 'Papa will pay.'

ON THE THRESHOLD.

I.

Ring out, O bells, ring silver-sweet o'er hill and moor
and fell!

In mellow echoes let your chimes their hopeful story
tell.

Ring out, ring out, all-jubilant, this joyous glad refrain:
'A bright new year, a glad new year hath come to us
again!'

II.

Ah, who can say how much of joy within it there may
be

Stored up for us, who listen now to your sweet melody?
Good-bye, Old Year! Tried, trusty friend, thy tale at
last is told.

O New Year, write thou thine for us in lines of
brightest gold.

III.

The flowers of spring must bloom at last, when gone
the winter's snow;

God grant that after sorrow past, we all some joy may
know.

Though tempest-tossed our barque awhile on Life's
rough waves may be,

There comes a day of calm at last, when we the
Haven see.

IV.

Then ring, ring on, O pealing bells! there's music in
the sound.

Ring on, ring on, and still ring on, and wake the
echoes round,

The while we wish, both for ourselves and all whom we
hold dear,

That God may gracious be to us in this the bright new
year!

A. H. BALDWIN.

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, 47 Paternoster Row, LONDON, and 339 High Street, EDINBURGH.